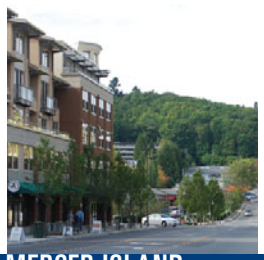
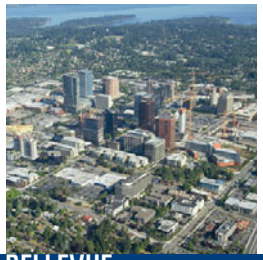
EAST LINK PROJECT

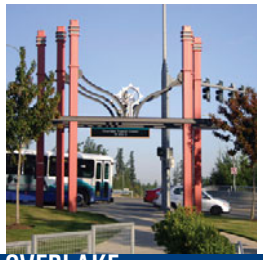
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

Public and Agency Comment Summary

SEATTLE


MERCER ISLAND


BELLEVUE


OVERLAKE

REDMOND

SOUNDTRANSIT
CENTRAL PUGET SOUND
REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY

Washington State Department of Transportation

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Transit Administration

March 2009

East Link Draft EIS

Public and Agency Comment Summary

Prepared for
Sound Transit

Prepared by
CH2MHill

March 2009

Table of Contents

1. Introduction **1**

2. Overview of Comments Received **1**

3. Major Comments by Segment **3**
- Segment A 3
- Segment B 3
- Segment C 4
- Segment D 5
- Segment E 6
- Maintenance Facilities 6
- Suggestions for Modified and New Project Alternatives 6

4. Comments Received from Public Agencies **7**
- Project Area Jurisdictions 7
  - Seattle 7
  - Mercer Island 7
  - Bellevue 8
  - Redmond 9
  - King County 10
    - King County Metro Transit 10
    - King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks, Wastewater Treatment Division 10
- Federal Agencies and Tribes 11
    - U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) 11
    - Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) 11
    - Advisory Council on Historic Preservation 11
- State Agencies 11
    - Washington State Department of Ecology 11
    - State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation 11
- Regional Public Agencies 12
- Other Public Agencies 12

5. Comments Received from Organizations **13**
- Business Groups 13
- Residential Groups 15
- Interest Groups 15

1. Introduction

This document summarizes comments received on the East Link Project Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). It is intended to serve as a summary only; it is not intended to address every comment received. The U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Transit Administration (FTA), Sound Transit (the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority), and Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) published the East Link Draft EIS on December 12, 2008. The 75-day extended comment period ended on February 25, 2009. The general public, business groups, organizations, and agencies submitted comments by mail, e-mail, and on comment forms provided by Sound Transit. Oral statements were also recorded during the following five public hearings and open houses:

- Wednesday, January 21, 2009, Old Redmond Schoolhouse Community Center, Redmond
- Thursday, January 22, 2009, Thurgood Marshall Elementary School, Seattle
- Tuesday, January 27, 2009, Community Center at Mercer View, Mercer Island
- Wednesday, January 28, 2009, Bellevue High School, Bellevue
- Thursday, January 29, 2009, Bellevue City Hall, Bellevue

This summary provides an overview of the comments received by segment, by public agencies, and by organizations. All the comments received and responses to those comments will be included in the Final EIS.

2. Overview of Comments Received

Sound Transit received 765 comment submittals or individual statements on the Draft EIS during the comment period. The comments covered a wide range of issues and represented viewpoints from residents, property owners, organizations, business groups, businesses, and government agencies. Most comments were generally supportive of East Link but expressed preferences or opposition to specific alternatives. Approximately 27 of the 765 submittals specifically objected to the East Link Project. Most of the comments came from individuals living, working, or with property interests in the project study area. The majority of commenters referenced one or more segments of the project area and stated a preference or objection to one or more alternative. Over half of the comments submitted were regarding Segment B (South Bellevue). The following lists how many comment submittals referenced each segment, describes which segment alternatives received the largest number of supportive comments, and highlights which segment alternatives received the most endorsements from organizations and agencies:

Segment A, I-90 - approximately 60 submittals.

- Joint Use of D2 Roadway. Most comments supported a joint use of the D2 Roadway, including King County Metro.
- Mercer Island Station. Mercer Island preferred the station design with entrances on 77th and 80th rather than with the pedestrian bridge, with the understanding that Sound Transit will work with the City to address park and ride capacity.
- Bellevue Way Interchange with I-90 HOV Direct Access Ramps. Most comments supported an elevated light rail alignment that retains the South to West on-ramp but commenters generally saw less need for the East to North off-ramp.

Segment B, South Bellevue - approximately 410 submittals. Of the five alternatives, the B7 alternative received the largest number of supportive comments. While to a much lesser degree, Alternatives B3, B2E, and B2A received an equal number of supportive comments from the public. Most of the endorsements from organizations and agencies focused on the B3 and B7 alternatives:

- B3 is supported by the City of Bellevue (if modified), Sierra Club, and Bellevue Downtown Association (if modified). Proposed modifications to B3 focused on moving the light rail to the

east side of Bellevue Way SE and 112th Ave SE. Several organizations expressed support for any Bellevue Way SE alternative including: Town of Beaux Arts Village, Puget Sound Energy, Puget Sound Regional Council, State Department of Ecology, and condominiums along 118th Ave SE (Brookshire and Mercer Park).

- B7 is supported by Surrey Downs and Bellecrest neighborhood associations, Bellevue Chamber of Commerce, Bellevue Downtown Association, Eastside Transportation Association, Condominiums along 112th (Bellefield Residential Park and Carriage Place), and Vision Line Coalition.

Segment C, Downtown Bellevue - approximately 250 submittals. Of the six Segment C alternatives, the C2T alternative received the largest number of supportive comments. C3T and C1T received a notable number of supportive comments from the public. Most of the endorsements from organizations and agencies focused on C2T, C3T, and C4A.

- C2T is supported by City of Bellevue, Bellevue Chamber of Commerce, Eastside Transportation Association, Puget Sound Energy, Vision Line Coalition, and City of Snohomish.
- C3T is supported by the Bellevue Downtown Association.
- C4A is supported by Microsoft and Sierra Club.
- Both the City of Redmond and Redmond Chamber of Commerce support affordable options, whether the alternative is at-grade or elevated. Meydenbauer Convention Center opposes the C1T and C2T alternatives.

Segment D, Bel-Red/Overlake - approximately 90 submittals. Of the four Segment D alternatives, D2A received the largest number of supportive comments. Alternative D5 received the least number of supportive statements. Most of the endorsements from organizations and agencies focused on D2A.

- D2A is supported by the City of Bellevue, Bellevue Chamber of Commerce (if modified), Bellevue Downtown Association (if modified), City of Redmond, Transportation Choices Coalition, Vision Line Coalition (if modified), Puget Sound Energy, and Sierra Club.
- The City of Redmond supports alternative D2A and D2E and also request continued evaluation of the portion of the D5 alternative in the Overlake area.

Segment E, Downtown Redmond - approximately 90 submittals. Of the three E alternatives, E2 received the largest number of supportive comments. Alternative E4 received the least number of supportive comments. Similarly, several organizations and agencies endorsed E2.

- E2 is supported by City of Redmond, Greater Redmond Chamber of Commerce, Microsoft, Transportation Choices Coalition, Puget Sound Regional Council, Puget Sound Energy, City of Snohomish, Redmond residents and Marymoor Heights Condominium.

Maintenance Facilities – approximately 12 submittals. Commenters, including the City of Bellevue, generally did not support the 116th, BNSF, and SR 520 maintenance facilities (MF1, MF2, and MF3). The City of Bellevue supports the maintenance facility MF-5 in downtown Redmond.

Of the 765 submittals, approximately 170 generally supported or opposed the project and did not advocate or oppose a particular alternative. Overwhelmingly, transportation issues were the top concern, related to congestion, parking, access limitations, transit ridership, or pedestrian and bicycle issues. Other common issues of concern included noise and vibration, property acquisition and property values, visual affects, land use, neighborhoods, parks, ecosystems, construction, and project financing and cost. Specific suggestions for new alternatives or modifications to the proposed alternatives in the Draft EIS were made in approximately 110 submittals. Approximately 75 submittals included comments that suggested fundamental changes to the East Link project. Examples of these comments included using different

technologies for high-capacity transit (HCT), developing a bus rapid transit system instead of light rail, and providing HCT to the Eastside along different corridors, such as State Route (SR) 520.

3. Major Comments by Segment

The following summarizes comments received by project segment.

Segment A

Most of the comments received on Segment A concerned the transportation operations of I-90. Because the East Link Project would convert the center roadway from vehicle operations to an exclusive rail corridor, several comments expressed concern that the loss of the center roadway would potentially create additional congestion and freight impacts. Even with the additional high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes to be built as part of the I-90 Two Way Transit and HOV Project, comments listed concerns about how the new HOV lanes will meet traffic flow performance measures. Additionally, several comments questioned how Mercer Island residents would safely weave into and out of the I-90 lanes. Most comments regarding the D2 roadway supported joint use of bus and light rail on this roadway between Seattle and Rainier Station.

Concerns about both stations in Segment A focused on adequate parking and spillover on-street parking in adjacent neighborhoods. Several mentioned issues about possible congestion on residential streets and potential pedestrian impacts surrounding stations.

Some comments also suggested analyzing a trans-lake alternative that did not use I-90. Some suggested that commuters would be accommodated in the SR 520 Bridge Replacement and HOV Project.

Segment B

Of the over 400 comment submittals received regarding Segment B, most discussed the BNSF Alternative (B7), with almost 250 supporting this alternative and at least 70 opposing it. Some commenters sent multiple comment submittals. Over 200 commenters referenced transportation concerns in Segment B, more than any other segment. Comments on Segment B generally fell into two categories: those supporting and those opposing the use of the BNSF right-of-way.

Those supporting use of the BNSF right-of-way also fell into two general categories. The first type of support was oriented toward the ability to extend light rail to the east and south in the future, specifically to Eastgate, Issaquah, and Factoria, which many believe would be easier from this right-of-way. These supporters also felt that use of existing right-of-way would be a better use of money and that crossing Mercer Slough now as part of East Link would ultimately save money, rather than crossing it in the future to expand the light rail system to the east and/or south. Nearby access to I-405 was also cited in many submittals.

The second type of support for use of the BNSF right-of-way was based on opposition to running light rail along Bellevue Way SE and/or 112th Avenue SE. Opposition to using these roads generally focused on potential residential and business displacements, noise impacts, visual impacts, increased traffic, and effects on neighborhood cohesion. Additional concerns include potential for increased crime, effects on property values, and impacts on parks. These concerns were related to both during construction and operation of the project. Concern was expressed about whether or not construction mitigation proposed with any of the alternatives along Bellevue Way SE was adequate. Another concern was future land use opportunities in this area, as some people believe that all available right-of-way should be preserved for future road widening and others are concerned that upzoning would occur, resulting in increased density around stations. A number of the supportive comments asserted that B7 is more consistent with the Bellevue Comprehensive Plan, the South Bellevue Subarea Plan, Bellevue Light Rail Best Practices, and the Bellevue Chamber of Commerce. Many commenters opposed to the Bellevue Way SE alternatives also questioned the ridership forecast for B7 and felt that ridership for this alternative was underestimated. In

addition, at least 50 submittals expressed support for a proposal developed by the "Vision Line Coalition", which includes the BNSF Alternative (B7).

Comments that opposed using the BNSF right-of-way for Alternative B7 focused on the proximity of residences to this right-of-way, which they believed would result in potential noise impacts, potential effects on property values, and traffic impacts on 118th Avenue SE. They also referred to the projected low ridership and, therefore, low cost-effectiveness of this alternative. Several comments acknowledged that transit access is not convenient in this area and that there are limited opportunities for people to walk to a station. Some commenters felt that the 118th Station's location near I-405 would actually promote driving rather than walking to the park-and-ride. Many residents along this corridor expressed concern about changes in this area related to the current expansion of I-405, leaving a more limited area for light rail to occupy, and that use of this BNSF right-of-way for light rail might preclude other future uses, such as a trail or commuter rail. Other comments opposed the B7 alternative due to potential impacts on wetlands and habitat in the Mercer Slough and on the Mercer Slough Environmental Education Center.

Both supporters and opponents of B7 were concerned about construction in Mercer Slough related to geological hazards, including construction of the South Bellevue Station and park-and-ride lot expansion (for supporters of B7) and construction across the slough (for opponents of B7).

Over 80 comment submittals specifically opposed Alternative B1, due to the potential high number of relocations, neighborhood impacts, impacts on businesses, and limited connections in Segment C. Over 30 submittals supported this alternative, however, because of service to denser residential and business areas. At least 40 submittals supported the 112th SE Alternatives (B2A, B2E, and B3) because of lower cost, better access to downtown, use of the South Bellevue Park-and-Ride, and the grade-separation of elevated sections to benefit traffic operations and increase safety. Several commenters suggested moving the 112th SE Bypass Alternative (B3) off of Bellevue Way and 112th Avenue corridors and placing it on the eastern edge of Bellevue Way's right-of-way to minimize potential roadway impacts. Most comments supported an elevated light rail alignment that retains the South to West on-ramp but commenters generally saw less need for the East to North off-ramp.

Segment C

Approximately 250 comment submittals discussed Segment C. They generally focused on the type of profile: tunnel, at-grade, or elevated. The general preference was for a grade-separated alternative through downtown. More comments supported tunnels than opposed them, while more opposed at-grade and elevated profiles than supported them. Opposition to tunnels primarily focused on higher costs and risk, while support focused on higher ridership, a perception of less disruption during construction, and long-term compatibility with an urban environment. Traffic flow in downtown Bellevue was referenced by over 80 commenters, mostly as support for why tunnel alternatives are necessary in this segment. Second most important among commenters was the view that tunnel alternatives would produce higher ridership, which would support long-term growth plans with less disruption to traffic.

Of the tunnels, the 106th NE Tunnel Alternative (C2T) received the greatest support (over 50 comment submittals); comments indicated that C2T would offer better access to the Wilburton Subarea on the east side of I-405 and avoid impacts on north of downtown to businesses and neighborhoods. Other comments opposed C2T because of the extensive cut-and-cover construction in downtown and impacts to NE 6th and the Meydenbauer Convention Center. C3T was favored by many due to the high ridership, fastest service through downtown, less construction disturbance, and the additional station it provides, which would serve the north downtown area.

The location of the Hospital Station (Alternatives C1T and C2T) was generally preferred over the Ashwood/Hospital Station, including by Overlake Hospital, Group Health, and Children's Hospital, although they indicated either station could work well for them. However, the Bellevue Way Tunnel Alternative (C1T) was unpopular because of the number of relocations and the construction disruption

associated with a cut-and-cover tunnel. Potential park impacts from tunnel portals in Surrey Downs Park associated with C2T and the 108th NE Tunnel Alternative (C3T) and in McCormick Park associated with C3T were also identified as concerns in many comments.

Comments regarding the at-grade Couplet Alternative (C4A) generally opposed it because of longer travel time, impacts on business, surface traffic, property access, pedestrian and vehicle safety, and the ability for this alternative to accommodate long-term traffic operations. Supporters for C4A liked the accessibility and lower cost of this alternative compared to tunnels and felt that it would not have the impacts of elevated alternatives. While most comments received on the 112th NE Elevated (C7E) and 110th NE Elevated alternatives (C8E) were opposed to them because of visual, noise, and community impacts, others supported the elevated alternatives because of lower cost and faster travel times.

Several submittals expressed opposition to alternatives that use the Ashwood/Hospital Station (C3T, C4A, C7E, and C8E) because of the high number of business displacements, primarily medical offices that would occur for construction staging. Several commenters felt the Old Bellevue and East Main stations were unnecessary, while some supported these locations because of potential for future growth in these areas. In addition, at least 50 submittals for the "Vision Line Coalition" supported the 106th Tunnel (C2T).

Segment D

Approximately 90 parties commented on Segment D. Most comments related to specific alternatives in Segment D. Primary concerns raised in the comments were related to transportation and the built environment. Transportation comments included concerns regarding congestion, parking, and traffic impacts during construction, ridership, and reduced access to business properties. Other major built environment comments included concerns related to property acquisition, consistency with future land uses, noise and vibration impacts to medical equipment operation, visual impacts, and property value impacts. Comments regarding the natural environment included concerns about creeks and loss of trees. Project costs and economic impacts for specific alternatives were also mentioned frequently.

The NE 16th At-Grade Alternative (D2A) received the greatest support (over 35 comment submittals). Supporters of D2A noted that this alternative would support redevelopment of the Bel-Red area consistent with the City of Bellevue's land use vision. Transportation operations were commonly referenced in support of D2A, as this alternative would have the highest ridership, align with Bellevue and Redmond long-range planning goals and objectives, and avoid congested streets. The few commenters expressing opposition to D2A cited increased property impacts and the cost of this alternative. Over 20 comment submittals supported the NE 16th Alternative (D2E) because of fewer impacts to specific properties, service to greater numbers of people and businesses, similar benefits to transportation operations mentioned for D2A, and the elevation over creeks. Concerns expressed regarding D2E included its higher cost relative to D2A and its visual and property value impacts.

More comment submittals (over 20) opposed the NE 20th Alternative (D3) than supported it. Many of these commenters represented medical offices and facilities, and they noted noise and vibration impacts on medical equipment and patients. Other businesses also expressed concern regarding D3 property impacts and loss of trees and buffer area. Comments regarding the SR 520 Alternative (D5) cited its inconsistency with the land use plans for the area and lack of ridership. Others noted that this alternative would provide greater opportunity to attract riders from other Eastside communities and result in fewer impacts to existing businesses. Of the approximately 20 submittals expressing a preference for this alternative, approximately half supported and half opposed it.

Several commenters felt that light rail ridership estimates in Segment D should be updated to include the growth numbers included in the newly adopted Bel-Red Corridor and Overlake Neighborhood land use plans. There were a number of comments concerned about the current overcapacity of the existing Overlake Transit Center park-and-ride lot and the perception that no additional parking spaces would be provided through the East Link Project. Additionally, concerns were expressed about the perceived

traffic congestion around the vicinity of the Overlake Transit Center that would occur during light rail construction and operation.

Segment E

Approximately 90 parties' submitted comments related to Segment E. Most comments referred to specific alternatives and most pertained to built environment impacts from the alternatives, primarily visual impacts and noise impacts on residences. Comments regarding natural environment impacts were also common and included issues related to the Sammamish River, vegetative buffers, and the removal of trees.

More commenters (over 20) expressed objection to the Redmond Way Alternative (E1) than supported it (less than 10), citing traffic congestion along West Lake Sammamish Parkway and potential impacts on residences such as property value decreases, property acquisitions, noise impacts, and visual impacts. Natural environment concerns were also noted for this alternative. Those in support of this alternative noted that it would best serve people coming from the east of downtown Redmond and would have fewer ecosystem impacts than other Segment E alternatives.

The Marymoor Alternative (E2) received the most support, approximately 35 submittals, with commenters noting relatively fewer impacts on residents, including less visual and noise impacts, fewer acquisitions, and reduced traffic. Several commenters preferred this alternative because it would follow an existing transit corridor, offer better accessibility, and include stops at Redmond Town Center and Redmond Transit Center. The few commenters opposed to this alternative expressed concern regarding traffic congestion and parking impacts.

Comments regarding the Leary Way Alternative (E4) noted concerns due to property acquisition, property value decreases, and roadway access. Specific property impacts mentioned include displacement of the Justice William White House, a historic resource; impacts on Redmond Town Center; and removal of the Residence Inn. Visual impacts were also noted, including impacts to the mature trees along the gateway to the city on Leary Way.

Over half of the commenters who discussed Segment E listed transportation issues. Many comments indicated concern about the Redmond Town Center vicinity parking, traffic, and access impacts with East Link. Similar concerns were expressed about current traffic congestion issues within this area, which commenters noted would only get worse with East Link. Their feeling was that station locations could encourage more drivers to come into Redmond, which could exacerbate traffic and parking problems. Similar comments expressed the importance of park-and-ride lot locations and their capacity because these facilities can directly affect traffic management and pedestrian access.

Maintenance Facilities

Approximately 12 comments mentioned the maintenance facility alternatives. Comments cited the inconsistency of the 116th, BNSF, and SR 520 maintenance facilities (MF1, MF2, and MF3) with Bellevue land use plans in the Bel-Red area. Some property owners were concerned about impacts to their property from MF1, MF2, MF3, and MF5. Other commenters noted the property acquisition impacts that MF3 would have. One comment regarding the SE Redmond Maintenance Facility (MF5) noted the cost savings of this alternative and another noted the consistency of this alternative with land use plans. One commenter questioned the potential for hazardous materials spills at maintenance facilities.

Suggestions for Modified and New Project Alternatives

Approximately 75 submittals included comments that did not refer to the East Link Project as defined in the Draft EIS. Some of these comments questioned the project as light rail, instead suggesting that bus rapid transit (BRT) would provide high capacity transit between the Eastside and Seattle in a less costly manner with fewer impacts. Others stated that the SR 520 corridor would better provide this connection for light rail. Comments expressing a preference for light rail connections to Factoria and Eastgate were

also submitted. Other commenters stated that the project did not serve other Eastside communities such as Kirkland and Renton. A couple of commenters questioned the connection of the Eastside to downtown Seattle rather than directly to the airport or other Eastside communities. Several commenters suggested the use of the LEVX technology, described as a "Zero Energy Permanent Magnet Suspension System and highly efficient Hybrid Non-Contact Linear Drive" for high capacity transit to the Eastside.

Approximately 70 commenters submitted suggestions for modifications to existing alternatives. These modifications were suggested mainly to reduce property acquisitions, neighborhood impacts, business impacts, traffic congestion, or travel time, or to serve specific areas. The following discussion does not include all of the suggestions, but those received more frequently are described.

The City of Bellevue recommended and the Bellevue Downtown Association supported a modified B3 alternative that would follow the east side of Bellevue Way and 112th Avenue SE turning east before SE 8th Street, at-grade as much as possible, and turning east to 114th Avenue SE becoming elevated and north to the East Main Station. This alternative, as suggested for study by the City and the BDA, would include various mitigations to address the function of Bellevue Way, maintain and improve HOV access from south Bellevue Way to westbound I-90, and maintain access for Enatai residents. Numerous commenters expressed support for the B3 modification.

One of the more frequently suggested modifications was termed the B7/C8E hybrid route, which would follow the B7 alignment and the run along 118th Avenue SE to a station near Greenbaum Furniture, continuing north along 114th Avenue SE to Main Street with no additional stations. Continuing past Main Street on 114th Avenue NE, it would enter downtown via a tunnel at NE 2nd Street rather than the elevated proposal. One alternative termed "C8T" was described similarly to the modified C8E and also frequently suggested. Several commenters suggested using the BNSF corridor for longer segments, some all the way through Segment C.

Several commenters suggested modifying D2A to cross under 120th Avenue NE and 124th Avenue NE with a retained cut profile and moving this route to the south to reduce property impacts.

4. Comments Received from Public Agencies

Project Area Jurisdictions

Seattle

The City of Seattle submitted no comments.

Mercer Island

The City of Mercer Island supports the additional mobility that this project would bring Mercer Island and the region. The City also maintained that based on the agreements of the 1976 Memorandum of Agreement and the subsequent amendments, they anticipate that Mercer Island will maintain use of the HOV lanes until such time that these access points exceed operational standards. The City does not support the pedestrian overcrossing to the Mercer Island station with the understanding that Sound Transit will work with the City to address park and ride capacity. The City favors modifying the I-90 Two-Way Transit and HOV Operations Project to provide an eastbound HOV off-ramp at Island Crest Way instead of at 77th Avenue. The City is concerned that existing park-and-ride lots will not be adequate for future ridership demands that would be required to maintain Mercer Island use of the light rail facility. The City looks forward to working with Sound Transit to ensure that pedestrians are well served, that design guidelines are upheld, and that construction impacts are addressed. They are interested in working with Sound Transit on mitigation for parking impacts.

Bellevue

The City of Bellevue submitted a letter summarizing the City Council-preferred alternatives, which includes a modified Alternative B3 in Segment B, Alternative C2T in Segment C, and Alternative D2A in Segment D. Major themes in their discussion of preferred alternatives include markets served, surface transportation impacts, the ridership analysis, noise impacts, business and residential displacements, and ecosystem impacts. This submittal also included a staff summary letter that summarizes the themes reflected in the City's detailed comments on the Draft EIS. The City staff comments discussed differences in transportation modeling results from their own analyses, additional transportation analysis needed, and other analyses they felt were incomplete or lacking sufficient detail, including neighborhoods, visual quality, parks, critical areas, and construction impacts. The City staff also requested more detailed information regarding mitigation and the permitting process.

The Bellevue City Council's preferred alternative is B3 for South Bellevue, modified to run on the east side of 112th Avenue SE and to turn east before SE 8th Street. The City believes this alternative would be most consistent with local policy objectives and would best meet the City's needs. The Council also felt this modified alternative would help maintain traffic capacity on Bellevue Way, minimize impediments to driveways, maintain and optimize regional connections at the South Bellevue Park-and-Ride and have convenient pedestrian and bicycle access to nearby neighborhoods and the I-90 multi-use trail. The City expressed concern about permanent traffic impacts on Bellevue Way and suggested mitigation strategies, including grade-separated station access and an additional HOV lane on Bellevue Way SE. The City would also like to ensure the west-bound HOV on-ramp from Bellevue is preserved. The displacement of transit service with a temporary closure of the South Bellevue Park-and-Ride during construction is a concern.

The City Council felt that B7 could provide additional long-term regional transit benefits along the I-405 corridor, but ultimately concluded that B7 presented substantial adverse impacts with limited opportunities for mitigation. However, the Council feels this alternative should receive additional analysis in the Final EIS. The City also recognized that B7 would create out-of-direction travel for patrons east and south of I-90 and require transit service modifications that would lengthen a rider's travel time and deter users of the regional system. The City Council unanimously rejected the Bellevue Way Alternative (B1) and 112th SE Elevated Alternative (B2E) because of high levels of potential construction and property impacts. The Council did not support the 112th SE At-Grade Alternative (B2A) due to the location of the SE 8th Station and the widening of 112th Avenue SE that would be required. For all Segment B alternatives, the Council opposed the loss of westbound HOV on-ramps at I-90 and would like these ramps preserved.

The Bellevue City Council preferred C2T in Segment C because it would maximize the regional system, minimize the potential for downtown Bellevue to be a choke-point for the system, and allow for future growth and land use opportunities east of I-405. The Council was concerned about the cut-and-cover construction for C2T and how best to minimize this potential impact as well as the reduction in roadway lanes on NE 6th Street. C1T was rejected by the City Council because of high cost, risk, and residential and business displacements. However, the Council did like the location of the Old Bellevue Station associated with C1T, and proposed that Sound Transit analyze a station at Main Street and 106th Avenue NE with Alternative C2T, in lieu of the East Main Station. C3T was not preferred by the Council because of the Ashwood/Hospital Station location, the high number of potential business displacements, and potential impacts to McCormick Park.

The Council unanimously rejected C4A because they feel it would limit capacity in already strained right-of-way and lacks community support. The City believes Bellevue's "superblock" configuration with few streets and narrow 60-foot street right-of-way constrain the ability to add capacity for light rail or vehicular traffic in the future. Both elevated alternatives were rejected, partially due to visual and potential pedestrian impacts and access conflicts. In addition, the 112th NE Elevated Alternative (C7E)

would have poor service to most of downtown Bellevue, and the 110th NE Elevated Alternative (C8E) would have traffic conflicts caused by columns placed in the medians.

Within Segment D, Bellevue preferred the NE 16th At-Grade Alternative (D2A) because it would advance their long-range goals, whereas the SR 520 Alternative (D5) is the least consistent with their long-range planning. The Council was not as supportive of the NE 16th Elevated Alternative (D2E), even though it follows the same alignment as D2A, because it is entirely elevated. They feel an elevated alternative could have potential visual impacts on planned development in the Bel-Red area, and it would have greater cost than D2A without increasing ridership. The City's transportation concern with NE 20th Alternative (D3) focused on access limitations for commercial properties along NE 20th Street and the potential economic impacts to businesses along this corridor. Finally, the City supported East Link reaching Overlake Transit Center and providing interim transit service from downtown Redmond to mitigate any potential interim terminus parking and traffic impacts.

The City staff expressed concerns about the land use and growth forecasts as they relate to transportation demand modeling, consistency with Puget Sound Regional Council *Destination 2030*, the Bel-Red Subarea plan, and the Downtown Implementation Plan update. The City requested that additional information be provided in transportation analysis for the Final EIS for street operations, access modifications, increased study area, and mitigation. The City staff also expressed concerns about the at-grade downtown operations analysis, including constraints on intersection signal phasing, driveway closures, intersection blockages, and limitations on future roadway system expansion. The City staff feels that an at-grade alternative in downtown Bellevue may limit the ability to meet long-term vehicle forecast demands for the downtown area because the study area does not include east of I-405.

The City views maintenance base MF-5 in downtown Redmond as the most desirable location. The other three maintenance bases evaluated in Segment D are not consistent with the land uses envisioned for the Bel-Red Corridor. Further MF3 would require piping a stream which is inconsistent with current City of Bellevue policies.

Redmond

The City of Redmond provided general comments as well as indicated the City's preferred alternative. The City emphasized the importance of managing costs and risks so that East Link can be extended to downtown Redmond. D2A, D2E, and D5 were identified as the alternatives the City would like Sound Transit to continue to evaluate in Segment D for the Overlake neighborhood. For Segment E, the City supports Alternative E2.

The City requests that the Overlake Transit Center be identified as an interim terminus facility, not the ultimate terminus of East Link. To address concerns raised over traffic conditions surrounding the Overlake Transit Center and as partial mitigation for potential construction impacts of an interim terminus at Overlake Transit Center, the City of Redmond recommended increasing the number of parking spaces at the park-and-ride to serve nearby residents but sized appropriately so as not to act as a magnet for regional parking demand. Additionally, with Overlake Transit Center is an interim terminus, the City of Redmond prefers that the 1,400-space parking structure near the SR 520/202 interchange be built as part of ST2 provide a transit connection with the Overlake Transit Center for Redmond and other users to the east.

The City Council saw advantages with alternatives D2A and D2E in Redmond's Overlake area because these alternatives are consistent with adopted visions and policies and with planned development in the area. These alternatives would have fewer potential impacts on businesses and utilities and the aerial alignment over 148th would cost less than tunneling under with D5. The City expressed concern with these two alternatives because of the potential impacts they would have on traffic operations along NE 24th Street. They also expressed concern with the potential urban design and aesthetics of the aerial structures.

The City saw the main advantage with D5 as the potential for few traffic impacts. Concerns about Alternative D5 included the potential impacts it would have on properties and businesses and potential conflicts with planned SR 520 improvements and a proposed stormwater management facility. They were also concerned with D5's lower ridership and with the station's potential urban design. Finally, the City noted the costs for tunneling under 148th Avenue NE as a concern. The City requested that the portion of the Alternative D5 route and station north of the Overlake Safeway continue to be considered as an alternative to running along NE 24th Street.

The City of Redmond supports Alternative E2 in Segment E because it would be mostly located in existing rights-of-way, has strong citizen support, and maximizes ridership while minimizing potential cost and impacts. While the City recognizes the potential cost, traffic, and property impacts associated with extending E2 to the Redmond Transit Center, they feel there are also potential opportunities to mitigate these impacts, such as pedestrian and local transit service connections, that should be investigated before selecting the Redmond Town Center as the terminus.

King County

King County Metro Transit

King County Metro Transit submitted a comment letter that focuses on four main issues in the I-90 corridor: use of the D2 Roadway, potential I-90 bus impacts, Mercer Island access and egress for buses, and cross-lake tolling assumptions.

The County commented that if the D-2 Roadway is not available as joint use for buses, the increase in bus travel times for routes on the Eastside and routes on 4th Avenue would be unacceptable for transit users. The County believes that the Final EIS analysis should offer alternatives if joint operation is not feasible, such as alternative bus priority pathways or non-D-2 alignments for East Link.

King County expressed concern about potential impacts that light rail could have on bus transit service in the I-90 corridor east of I-405 because of East Link's use of the center roadway and D-2 roadway. The Final EIS analysis should include changes to bus and rail networks and facilities needed to mitigate these potential impacts.

The current interchange design at 77th Avenue SE does not provide direct westbound access to the I-90 HOV lane. King County is concerned that WSDOT may not be able to construct the proposed eastbound direct HOV off-ramp at 77th Avenue. They expressed concern that bus access to enter/exit Mercer Island is limited, and Metro may not be able to provide stops on Mercer Island for I-90 service. During light rail operation this may not be a need with light rail and Sound Transit Route 554 service.

King County Metro Transit also commented about its concern that the Island Crest Way westbound on-ramp could degrade HOV lane performance if single-occupant vehicles are allowed to use the lane, even if they were allowed to use the lane through a HOT lane concept.

The County also expressed concern that the Draft EIS analyzes neither the effects of tolling on SR 520 in the nearer term (i.e., 2020) nor those of a possible tolling on I-90. Because tolling could have a potential substantial impact on traffic flow, transit ridership, and the speed and reliability of bus travel, King County requested more analysis of tolling to be provided in the Final EIS.

King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks, Wastewater Treatment Division

Comments submitted by the Wastewater Treatment Division requested to include a reference to a King County Code regarding industrial waste and a King County Public Rule regarding construction dewatering discharge to the sanitary sewer. They described the requirements and approvals to obtain for wastewater management and sanitary sewer discharges during construction and operation of East Link.

Federal Agencies and Tribes

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

The EPA stated that the Draft EIS was an exemplary environmental review of the East Link Project that communicated benefits of the project over the No Build Alternative and provided quality mitigation measures, such as low-impact development measures for stormwater and an understanding of mitigating residual ecosystem impacts. The EPA offered additional input on aquatic and air quality mitigation measures during construction.

Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)

FHWA's concerns focused on the feasibility of light rail on the floating bridge and associated air space and lease agreements necessary for temporary and permanent use of I-90 and I-405. FHWA also expressed concern for operational and construction safety measures. FHWA requested additional information on the feasibility of an expansion joint to accommodate light rail, highway operations and potential safety impacts from the project, safety impacts from construction on I-90, impacts from changes to HOV facilities, and use of the HOV lanes by Mercer Island single occupant vehicles (SOVs). They outlined the areas where Sound Transit would be required to receive FHWA approval before progressing, namely, HOV commitments to Mercer Island, feasibility of expansion joint, allowance for pedestrian crossings and stations located over interstates, and locating the substations on FHWA facilities or land owned by FHWA.

Advisory Council on Historic Preservation

The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation advised that Sound Transit continue to work with the State Historic Preservation Office to complete the Section 106 consultation.

Muckleshoot Indian Tribe

The Fisheries Division of the Muckleshoot Indian Tribe supports alternatives that have the fewest potential impacts to water resources including streams and wetlands in the project vicinity. The Muckleshoot Tribe stated its preference for B1 due to fewer impacts to streams, wetlands, and buffers; C1T and C3T east to the Ashwood/Hospital Station or C8E ; D2E because it is elevated for most stream crossings; and E1 or E4 due to fewer ecosystem impacts. The Muckleshoot Tribe commented that MF1 would cause the least ecosystem impacts and expressed opposition to MF3 due to the relocation of Goff Creek. They requested more assessment of existing stream habitat value, loss of habitat, and the potential impacts of artificial light spilling onto waterways. They also clarified the Tribe's fishing treaty rights in the project area.

State Agencies

Washington State Department of Ecology

The Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) submitted comments organized by the various programs they manage. For the Water Quality Program, Ecology listed requirements for stormwater runoff and a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit. For the Hazardous Waste and Toxics Reduction Program, Ecology defined hazardous waste requirements, and for the Shoreline and Environmental Assistance Program, they reviewed suggestions for Section 401 water quality certification and suggested changes to water quality references in the Ecosystem Technical Report. Clarifications on wetland impacts and wetland mitigation measures in both the Draft EIS as well as the Ecosystem Technical Report were suggested. Specific concerns were consistency with shoreline master plan updates (which are still under development); disposal of stockpiled construction material; and emphasis on avoiding alternatives that affect wetlands, the Sammamish River, and Bear Creek.

State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation

The Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP) submitted a letter that concurred with Sound Transit's submittal of 45 properties as eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), as well as the 332 non-eligible properties. DAHP feels further archaeological investigation would be warranted for the preferred alternative(s). DAHP encourages

discussion of effects on the NRHP I-90 Bridge, the Endresen Residence, and the Romaine Electric Building and requests more information on the project regarding the INS building in Seattle. DAHP states that they have concerns about project changes that may affect the Frederick Winters House and believes that depending on the alternative chosen and how it is implemented there could be adverse effects on the Pilgrim Lutheran Church, the Surrey Downs District, and the former Bellevue Fire Station, all of which are resources within the city of Bellevue. DAHP indicated that Alternative E4 would result in adverse effects on the Justice William White House in Redmond.

Regional Public Agencies

Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC)

The PSRC noted that the proposed East Link project connects three of the region's cities that contain designated Regional Growth Centers, which are the backbone of the transportation network, and that linking these centers with highly efficient transportation system is a key objective of its regional plans. PSRC would like the Final EIS to improve the characterization of Vision 2040, ST2 Plan, and the expandability of light rail in the future. PSRC would like Sound Transit to emphasize the implications of East Link on land use and the need to serve regional transit centers and assess the maintenance facilities for least energy and labor costs. PSRC opposes B7 and D5 because these alternatives do not directly serve planned population areas. They fully supported Alternative E2.

Puget Sound Clean Air Agency (PSCAA)

PSCAA supports the East Link Project for its contribution to increasing choices in mobility. PSCAA would like to make sure that Executive Order 07-02 Washington Climate Change Challenge is addressed through the assessment of greenhouse gas emissions and that the Final EIS assesses the worst case air quality scenario. The PSCAA letter included a number of preferred mitigation measures to reduce air quality impacts from construction.

Other Public Agencies

Three jurisdictions that are not within the study area of the East Link Project corridor submitted comments to Sound Transit voicing strong support for the East Link Project. Project-specific comments focused on accommodating station locations that could serve commuters to and from their communities. **The City of Snohomish** would feel most served by having stations on the current BNSF right-of-way where a potential future Eastside Corridor rail service could interconnect with East Link. The stations that seemed most valuable to the City of Snohomish were Redmond Town Center, SE Redmond, and the Hospital stations. The City of Snohomish also asked Sound Transit to consider increased bus service at the end of the line and building the project between Redmond and Bellevue first. The **City of Issaquah** asked that Sound Transit consider the implications of future connections to Issaquah in the development of this environmental review—such as assessing necessary accommodations at South Bellevue Park-and-Ride and the Mercer Island Station for additional light rail service to include extensions to Issaquah. The City of Issaquah would prefer to have future service be direct to both the Bellevue Transit Center Station and downtown Seattle. The **Town of Beaux Arts Village** supports alternatives that offer a station at the South Bellevue Park-and-Ride because that would provide them with enhanced mobility and access. The Town of Beaux Arts Village was concerned about potential traffic impacts if the west-bound HOV on-ramp were removed, but felt that loss of the east-bound HOV off-ramp would not be a significant impact.

The Port of Seattle offered input on two issues regarding the East Link Project: the use of the Eastside Rail Corridor (i.e., BNSF rail right-of-way) and the potential impacts of the project on freight and truck operations in the conversion of the I-90 center roadway to light rail. They would like to make sure that the trail, light rail, and the potential commuter rail could be accommodated in the Eastside Rail Corridor. They also feel that the additional discussions of freight movement and the possibility of mitigating increased travel time for freight movement are necessary.

5. Comments Received from Organizations

Comments on the East Link Draft EIS from organizations have been grouped into those representing businesses, residential, or interest groups.

Businesses and Business Groups

Business Groups

- Bellevue Downtown Association
- Bellevue Chamber of Commerce
- Greater Redmond Chamber of Commerce

Individual Businesses

- adrugstore.com
- Advanced Family Medicine, PLLC, ND
- Autologic
- Barrier Properties LLC
- Beacon Capital Partners
- Bellevue Arts Museum
- Bellevue Club
- Bellevue-Redmond Physical Therapy Center
- Bloch Management LLC
- Campbell Media Research
- Carl Warren & Company
- Castle Harbor
- Charles Schwab
- Clark Nuber
- Coca Cola Bottling Company
- Colliers International
- Commons Medical Building
- Dahlgren Family Properties
- Docomomo WEWA
- Eastside Tool and Rental
- Envelopes Unlimited
- Fitch & Ludwick
- Freiheit & Ho Architects
- GNP Rly
- Greenbaum Home Furnishings
- Gruman Nicoll
- Hal Woosley Properties
- IBG Enterprises
- Jack & Jill Daycare & Pre-School
- Kemper Development Company
- Legacy Companies
- Main Street Dental
- Meydenbauer Center
- Microsoft Real Estate and Facilities
- Morris Piha Real Estate Services
- Nickols Realty
- Nine Lake Bellevue Owners
- North Creek Law Firm
- Overlake/Group Health/Seattle Children's Hospital
- Overlake Internal Medicine Associates
- Pine Forest Properties
- PRiNTA Systems
- Proliance Sport Therapy and Rehabilitation
- Property Development Corporation
- PS Business Parks
- Qualstar Credit Union
- RBJK Ventures LLC
- Red Lion Associates, Property Oversight
- Red Lion Hotels Corp.
- Redmond Medical Center
- Robertson & Assoc Commercial Real Estate LCC
- Run Investment
- Schnitzer West
- Sears Holdings Corp
- Sign Pros
- Sunset Glass Co.
- The Evans Company
- TRF
- Universal Mechanical Service Co.
- Wright Runstad & Company

Business groups that submitted comments varied from individual businesses with concerns about potential impacts on their property to business-sponsored organizations, such as the chambers of commerce from Bellevue and Redmond. Still others who submitted comments are developers desiring to preserve or enhance the vitality of their property or properties.

The Bellevue Downtown Association recommended that Alternatives B3 (if modified), B7, C3T, and D2A (if modified) be brought forward for further review in the Final EIS, stating that these alternatives are the most consistent with downtown Bellevue's long-term economic, transportation, and land use goals and balance fewer negative impacts with stronger system ridership. For Segment B, they expressed a preference for Alternative B3 (modified to be east side running) over B7 but stated that both B3 and B7 should move forward for additional study in the Final EIS. They support C3T because it would have the

fewest surface mobility impacts during both construction and operation; it is the shortest, fastest and most cost-effective tunnel option and would promote the most ridership; and it avoids the potential impacts associated with cut and cover construction and reconstruction of the Bellevue Transit Center.

The Bellevue Chamber of Commerce stated its support for the Vision Line (B7, C2T, and D2A) due to fewer potential impacts on neighborhoods, less traffic impact and business disruption from construction, less property acquisition, fewer park impacts, and its function as a safe, reliable train service to convenient stations. The Chamber urged rejection of D5 based on the need to preserve SR 520 right-of-way capacity for the Bel-Red Corridor and Overlake Neighborhood.

The Greater Redmond Chamber of Commerce supports an East Link corridor that is the most affordable, stating that cities that choose any other alternative other than a surface rail line should bear the responsibility of required funding beyond the affordable surface option costs. They also support alternativeD3 with modifications and fully support Alternative E2. The Chamber is also concerned that efforts be made to relocate impacted businesses in Redmond.

The Meydenbauer Center, Bellevue's Convention Center, expressed serious concerns with Alternatives C1T and C2T. Their concerns were potential negative construction impacts on NE 6th Street that could affect the operations of the center; long term traffic impacts due to reduction of lane capacity and access restrictions on NE 6th which is also a primary transit bus access road; and aesthetic quality of the tunnel portal.

Overlake/Group Health/Seattle Children's Hospital stated either the Ashwood/Hospital Station or the Hospital Station could serve their needs. They requested the relocation of the Hospital station to the north closer to the hospital employee garage allowing for a safer pedestrian crossing of 116th Ave NE at NE 10th Street to maintain traffic flow. The hospital is concerned about potential emergency vehicle access and traffic impacts with the Ashwood/Hospital Station and the at-grade crossing at 116th Avenue NE. Due to pedestrian safety concerns, the hospital requests this station alternative include an elevated pedestrian crossing of NE 12th.

The Red Lion Hotel objects to C8E and staging for tunnel alternatives that connect from B3 and B7. Additionally, the Bellevue Club wrote several letters and collected over 985 member signatures opposing alternatives traveling up 112th Avenue NE, such as B2A and B2E, which connect to above-grade Segment C alternatives, or B3 that would reduce their parking.

Many, if not most, of the businesses whose property would need to be acquired by one or more alternative expressed concern about these acquisitions. They urged Sound Transit to choose an alternative that spared their property or business due to the hardship that would result from sale and/or relocation. Concerns about potential property impacts were expressed most frequently about the business property impacts in Segment D or the connections to Segment D from Segment C at the NE 12th Street crossing of I-405. This crossing concerned several hospital, medical, and office businesses. While the Redmond Chamber of Commerce favors D3 because it would result in fewer business impacts, several individual businesses along the NE 20th arterial felt more impacts would result from that alternative than would from D2A.

Costs and financing issues were raised in the consideration of alternative preferences, or as reasons to build some alternatives over others. B7 was perceived as the lowest-cost alternative while others, including different business groups, mentioned that it is the least cost-effective. While tunnels are the most costly, it was also mentioned that tunnels have long life spans and could preserve vitality in downtown Bellevue. Economic loss was a frequent concern among business groups listing the economic hardship of lost parking as well as the burden of construction on businesses. Some mentioned concern about the economic impacts of the potential visual impacts of an elevated guideway. Almost equally important among business groups was the possible traffic impacts of the project. Common themes for transportation concerns included potential loss of access, congestion during construction, reduction of roadway capacity, loss of HOV mobility, and overall increase in congestion. Of secondary concern,

business commenters listed potential visual impacts of the elevated profile in Segments C and D, and whether or not alternatives met the adopted land use and growth plans in Segments C, D, and E. They also listed concerns about potential noise and vibration impacts on medical diagnostic equipment with Alternative D3.

Residential Groups

- Carriage Place Condominiums Home Owners Assoc.
- Bellecrest Neighborhood Assoc.
- Marymoor Heights Condo
- Bellefield Residential Park
- Brookshire Homeowner's Assoc.
- Mercer Park Condominium Home Owners Assoc.
- Surrey Downs Community Club

There were three predominant segments where residential groups organized to voice their opinions collectively: Segments B, C, and E. In Segment B, the residential groups were divided among those who opposed alternatives that used Bellevue Way and 112th Avenue, thus preferring Alternative B7, and those who opposed B7. The listed concerns for both groups included a potential change in their quality of life, including property acquisition and/or loss of property value, noise, vibration, safety at stations located near neighborhoods, and visual intrusion. Both groups felt that traffic would worsen on the main arterials serving their neighborhood: Bellevue Way for residents in Enatai and Surrey Downs and 118th for residents living adjacent to the B7 corridor. Those living along the B7 corridor also expressed concern for potential recreation impacts and additional impacts on wetlands from the B7 crossing of Mercer Slough. Similarly, the residents along Bellevue Way SE felt that the blueberry farm, and valuable portions of Mercer Slough and the greenbelt west of Bellevue Way SE would be compromised by the East Link Project.

In Segment C, many residents supported the project and the increase of mobility options. They specifically did not want Alternative C8E, however, which would pass in an elevated profile in front of many condominium complexes north of NE 8th Street, because they feel it will create potential noise and visual impacts.

Finally, in Segment E, comments from residents centered on Alternative E1. Several residents objected to E1 traversing a hillside south of West Lake Sammamish Parkway, traveling below the grade of, but within view of, multiple condominium complexes. The opposition focused on the potential noise and visual impacts of this alternative. When listing their preference, Alternative E2 was widely listed.

Interest Groups

- Cascadia Discovery Institute
- Coalition for Effective Transportation Alternatives
- Eastside Heritage Center
- Eastside Transportation Association
- Full Gospel Christian Center
- Friends of Marymoor Park
- Highland Covenant Church
- Sierra Club, Cascade Chapter
- Transportation Choices Coalition
- TruthInTaxation/I-90 Users Coalition
- Vision Line Coalition

There were 11 commenters associated with community organizations or interest groups. The Vision Line Coalition is a recently formed group in response to the East Link Project and endorsed by 17 commercial property owners, businesses, and residents of the cities of Bellevue and Redmond. The Coalition for Effective Transportation Alternatives (CETA) and the Eastside Transportation Association (ETA) did not support adding light rail to the Eastside, maintaining that bus rapid transit would be a more viable alternative. However, ETA did offer its preference for alternatives in Segments B and C discussed below. These organizations also questioned the technical feasibility of light rail on the floating bridge. ETA also expressed concern and the need for more information regarding potential impacts to freight movement.

The I-90 Users Coalition expressed opposition to the project based on concerns regarding freight movement, sub-area equity, and technical issues of retrofitting the I-90 floating bridge.

Other interest groups offered their support while expressing concerns about project-specific design considerations and interest in receiving additional analysis. Transportation Choices Coalition suggested conducting an analysis of joint use of the I-90 center roadway by buses and light rail. In Segment B, the Vision Line Coalition endorsed B7 and requested further study of a modified B3, as proposed by the City of Bellevue. They echoed concerns of the residential interest groups, including potential light rail impacts on traffic operations, pedestrians and traffic circulation, safety, property acquisition, and noise (on residents and wildlife), and minimizing wetland impacts. ETA expressed its preference for B7 due to less congestion, fewer neighborhood impacts, and reduced property acquisition and maintenance of future roadway capacity. Transportation Choices Coalition voiced its support for the B1 alternative for its service to compact development areas and areas in Old Bellevue anticipated for future growth.

Eastside Heritage Center, the historical organization on the east side and the tenant of the Winters House, did not support the removal or degradation of the Frederick Winters House, a nationally registered historic property. They ask that if the preferred route is along the east side of Bellevue Way, that they be consulted in the preservation and mitigation that would be required. Regarding traffic concerns in Segment B, one suggestion is to widen Bellevue Way SE ahead of implementation of the East Link Project as mitigation to the potential traffic impacts of the project. The Cascadia Discovery Institute questioned possible freight impacts on the BNSF right-of-way, future use impacts from stations near the hospitals, and would like to make sure that the project does not preclude the potential for a trail and the Eastside Corridor Commuter Rail project within the BNSF right-of-way.

Interest groups that commented on Segment C, such as Transportation Choices Coalition, the Vision Line Coalition, and the Eastside Transportation Association, expressed strong preference for the tunnel alternatives, the latter two particularly supporting C2T. Elevated alternatives were strongly rejected for their potential visual intrusion and noise impacts, except by the Sierra Club, which supported C8E. The Sierra Club also supported C4A because it would increase pedestrian accessibility. Conversely, several comments listed pedestrian safety as the reason they resisted an at-grade alternative. The Vision Line Coalition suggested additional review of the effects of removing traffic lanes in downtown Bellevue, the potential economic impacts of reduced on-street parking and elevated guideways on rental markets, and re-evaluation of the visual assessment for all above-grade alternatives. The Vision Line Coalition listed potential impacts on McCormick Park and relocation of medical facilities as reasons for not favoring alternatives that cross at NE 12th Street. In addition, they expressed opposition to an at-grade crossing at 116th Avenue NE, where circulation would be impacted and hospital access impeded.

Comments in Segment D varied, but no interest group supported D3 or D5. Many mentioned that D5 does not support the newly adopted Bel-Red Subarea Plan, nor does it reserve potential for future SR 520 expansion. Several expressed concern that D3 would travel along NE 20th, a heavily traveled arterial. There was generally strong support for D2A from Transportation Choices Coalition, the Sierra Club, and the Vision Line Coalition (if modified) because it would best support transit-oriented development plans. Also, some doubted that the ridership appropriately considered the future growth plans for this area of Bellevue and Redmond. Both the Full Gospel Christian Center and the Highland Covenant Church expressed opposition to Alternative D3 due to potential impacts to their facilities. Finally, the Cascadia Organization suggested building the project from east to west.

The Friends of Marymoor Park expressed support for E2, which would travel along SR 520 on Marymoor Park. They expressed concern about how proposed maintenance facility locations in Segment E may potentially impact park access. Transportation Choices Coalition also expressed support for E2 as a cost-effective alternative. The Sierra Club expressed support for E4 because it would be more direct. They also felt that either dispersing park-and-ride lots or reducing the parking lot size may influence more transit connections.

SOUNDTRANSIT